

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

A TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT JOHN "MAC" SMITH

HON. MIKE MCINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 18, 2005

Mr. MCINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Sgt. John "Mac" Smith of Wilmington, North Carolina, for serving his country valiantly with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Operation Iraqi Freedom. On May 11, 2005, Sgt. Smith lost his life when a roadside bomb hit his convoy. He was courageously serving his second tour of duty in Iraq, and our heartfelt thanks and prayers go out to his family and friends in this time of grief.

At an early age, John's family knew that he was destined for the U.S. Army. As a toddler, he wore camouflage clothing and once spent a summer at Ft. Bragg. As a student at New Hanover High School in Wilmington, John was in the Army JROTC program, and during his senior year he served as drill team commander. John enlisted in the Army in 2000.

As a member of the Army, he dedicated his career to defending the values this nation holds dear. By risking his life to ensure the safety of others, John made the ultimate sacrifice. His valiant actions and steadfast service remind us of the gratitude we feel toward him and all the other servicemen and women who have lost their lives serving as guardians of this great country. John was indeed a man of courage and integrity.

Mr. Speaker, may the memory of Sgt. John "Mac" Campbell live on in our hearts, and may God's strength and peace be with his family.

ARTICLE BY RABBI ISRAEL ZOBERMAN

HON. THELMA D. DRAKE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 18, 2005

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to share the following article written by a constituent, Rabbi Israel Zoberman.

I vividly recall my pride back in 1980 at the Rockefeller Chapel of the University of Chicago as I received the first doctoral degree awarded to a Rabbi by McCormick Theological Seminary which is affiliated with the Presbyterian Church, USA. The dean whispered in my ear, "You are the first," without public fanfare. A disconcerting reminder of that ambiguous attitude is the recent controversial vote by the 216th General Assembly of the PC (USA) meeting in Richmond, Virginia for studying "selective divestment" from companies doing business in Israel with at least one million dollars in revenue, and deemed to hurt the Palestinians.

It is quite astonishing that there was a rather limited sense of the adverse impact of the anti-Israel move on the American Jewish

community. Did not the Presbyterian leadership know that the best way to unite the Jews is to challenge the Jewish state in a serious way? Organized American Jewry is surely committed to safeguarding Israel's well-being at the critical front here at home. For a mainline Protestant denomination, though with dwindling members but with yet considerable influence, to go beyond past critical resolutions and risk alienating its Jewish partners in common quests of interfaith dialogue for a better America and humanity, is a cause for an evaluative pause.

What has gone so wrong? How can we set the record straight and rejoin in essential and increased cooperation, establishing better lines of communication? In a climate of rising world anti-Semitism, won't divestment worsen matters, threatening to place Israel in the pariah state category as was the case with South Africa which the Presbyterians rightly pursued? Would other religious bodies and secular institutions be tempted to follow suit? Wouldn't added economic pressure and isolation damage Israel's ongoing courageous peace work, hurting a close ally of the U.S.?

To attack Israel following four bloody years of unrelenting and victimizing terrorist suicide bombings that no other nation would have tolerated without a major response that surely Israel could deliver, is a sad commentary on the exhibited callousness of mostly friends tuning out a certain reality. A reality including the plight of the Christian minority in the Arab Muslim world in general and particularly now among the Palestinians where ironically the Presbyterians have long roots of involvement, it, obviously affecting their stance on Middle East issues. It is also the outcome of too many Presbyterians lacking pertinent information.

The cited Israeli security barrier as problematic ignores the dramatic reduction in terrorist infiltrations as well as Israel's Supreme Court intervention in correcting the barrier's path to alleviate hardships, with its final destiny dependent upon future developments. It was after all the late Chairman Arafat who responded in 2000 at Camp David to the offered vision of peace with improved upon past violence, reverting to his old terrorist persona with which he chose to die. It is Prime Minister Sharon who succeeded in radically transforming himself to the point of supporting a Palestinian state, presently risking his life with his disengagement plan from Gaza and parts of the West Bank.

How can an enduring and inspiring Israel, a beleaguered outpost of Western values, be compared to a corrupt and terrorism-friendly Palestinian Authority yet to prove with its newly elected president Mahamud Abbas, through Israeli cooperation, that our trust in its democratic and peaceful potential is not dangerously misplaced? How tragic indeed that Palestinian suffering is largely due to its leaders' ineptitude and the duplicity of the Arab nations through the years, abusing their brethren's plight for their own regressive agenda, while refusing to grant them their own state prior to 1967 when Israel was saddled with the territories following an attack on Jewish sovereignty.

Lastly but not least, the continued Presbyterian misguided goal to missionize among Jews remains a blight on a denomination that deserves better. Commemorating the

60th anniversary of the liberation of the Holocaust's death camps with a first, special session of the United Nations General Assembly on January 24th, 2005, we recall that modern Israel arose from the martyrs' ashes. History has taught us that when we deny a people's spiritual authenticity we ultimately invite its physical annihilation.

SALUTING ANTHONY DEION BRANCH

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 18, 2005

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, Mississippi's community and junior college system produces some of the top football players in the Nation. They are always targets of recruitment from universities around the country seeking to bolster their football programs. From time to time, we produce a truly great player who can compete at the highest level with the leadership and poise necessary to be the top player in the top game. Anthony Deion Branch from Jones County Junior College—in my home county—was named Super Bowl XXXIX Most Valuable Player. Today I'd like to salute that achievement and speak a little about his road to that success.

Deion's career began in Albany, Georgia where he excelled in track, football and enjoyed soccer in high school. After graduating he made the long drive to Ellisville, Mississippi where he competed and earned a spot on the Jones County Junior College football team. There he grabbed 37 passes for 639 yards and five touchdowns as a freshman on the Bobcat squad. The following year he took 69 receptions for 1,012 yards and nine touchdowns, earning second-team All-American honors and leading JCJC to a 12-0 mark and a victory at the Golden Isles Bowl to bring home the junior college national championship.

The University of Louisville recruited Deion who hauled in 143 passes for 2,204 yards and 18 touchdowns in his two years there. He became only the second player in school history to record multiple 1,000 yard seasons and is listed fourth and sixth respectively in the school records for career touchdown catches and receptions with the Cardinals—and that in just two years.

The New England Patriots used their Number 65 pick in the 2002 Draft to bring in Deion to what many are now describing as a dynasty—three Super Bowl Victories in four years, two with Deion on the team.

Deion's first Super Bowl ring came without the MVP award; his colleague and football legend Tom Brady won it that year. But while many of us fans thought he should be considered, we didn't have to wait long to be satisfied. The following year, despite an injury in his second game which kept him on the sidelines for the next seven matches, Deion finished the season with 35 receptions for 454 yards and four touchdowns.

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